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The Secretary of Commerce has, however, taken pains to show that the issue is by no means a non-partisan one. On October 13, 1913, Secretary Redfield appeared before the House Committee on Expenditures in the Department of Commerce and thus expressed himself regarding the law of 1912: "I shall be glad to cooperate in any way within my lawful power or within the scope of my personal ability in carrying out to the spirit and to the letter what I regard as very wise legislation for the protection of our fur-seal herd." He even went further and announced to the committee that he had discharged the chief of the Alaska division of the Bureau of Fisheries and the naturalist of the fur-seal herd, because, forsooth, their "mental attitude" toward this law was not right. In other words, because these men believed the law was a mistake, they were disciplined.

The new commission is therefore in a dilemma. It must find the law of 1912 to be right or else to be wrong. In the one case, in a single season's work and with opportunity to get first-hand information on vital matters cut off, it must either review and turn down the work of an eminent body of men acting on unlimited data, or else it must contradict the expressed belief of the very authority under which the commission acts.

Meanwhile there hangs over the commission and its work a most heavy forfeit. The law of 1912, in so far as it prohibits the killing of male seals, was adjudged unnecessary eighteen years ago; the increase of  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. in the stock of breeding seals in 1913, the second season under exemption from pelagic sealing, fully bears out this decision. The Secretary of Commerce has in his possession to-day adequate data to warrant the immediate repeal of the law. Such repeal now would permit of the resumption of normal land sealing in 1914 and the taking of the half million dollars' worth of sealskins which the hauling grounds of the Pribilof Islands stand ready to yield. We lost a like sum in 1913 through the operation of the law. The delay necessary to let the new commission make its report will inevitably repeat this loss. In short, the report of the com-

mission will cost at a minimum \$500,000, fifteen per cent. of which belongs to Canada, fifteen per cent. to Japan, and seventy per cent. to the treasury of the United States, under the treaty of July 7, 1911.

GEORGE ARCHIBALD CLARK

#### THE PRESERVATION OF ANTHROPOID APES

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: The suggestion of Professor Robert Yerkes in SCIENCE of May 1, that permanent stations should be established in tropical countries for the preservation of anthropoid apes in order that observations of value from a psychological standpoint be obtained, prompts me to urge the same thing on another and more important ground. As readers of SCIENCE doubtless know, the question of the etiology and the treatment in a number of diseases which have hitherto baffled investigators, probably will depend upon the use of these apes as objects of experimentation, and for this, if for nothing else their extinction should be prevented.

H. GIFFORD

OMAHA, NEB.

#### SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

*Clean Water and How to Get It.* By ALLEN HAZEN. Second Edition. New York, John Wiley & Sons. 1914. Pp. 181. \$1.50.

*Studies in Water Supply.* By A. C. HOUSTON. New York, Macmillan Co., Limited. Pp. 193. \$1.60.

These two volumes may well be considered together, for they occupy the same general field, although their scope and method of treatment are quite different. Both authors are acknowledged experts in the subjects with which they deal.

Hazen's book is decidedly American in point of view and makes a strong case for the filtration of public water supplies as a means of protecting municipalities against typhoid and other forms of disease and for the improvement which can be so produced in the appearance, taste and odor of surface waters.

By some, the book will be regarded as too condensed to give a comprehensive knowledge of the many topics dealt with, but the